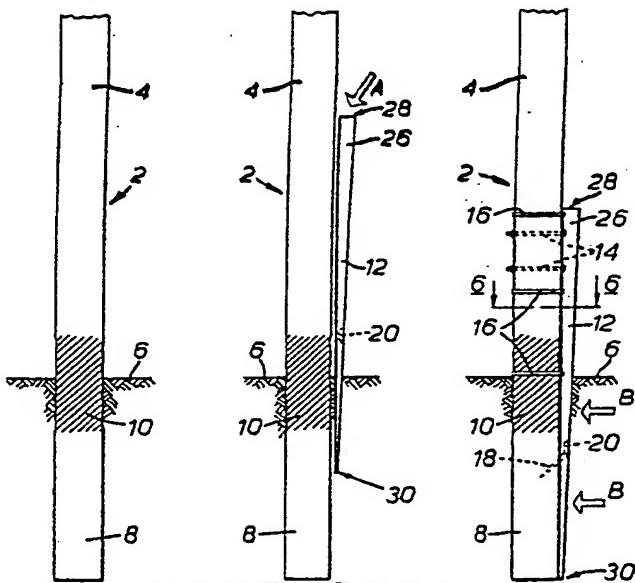




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(54) Title: A UTILITY POLE SUPPORT



(57) Abstract

A utility pole support (42) for repairing or strengthening a damaged or broken utility pole (2) including a first part (44) which is securely fastened to the pole above ground level in use and a second part (46) which is so shaped to be driven into the ground against the surface of the pole under the ground in use to provide support around the weakened part (10) of the pole, the support being retained in place below ground level by the action of the earth against the pole support.

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### A UTILITY POLE SUPPORT

The present invention relates to a device and method for reinforcing utility poles and the like, and more particularly, to strengthening utility poles that 5 have been weakened such as by weathering or corrosion.

Although the present invention will be described with particular reference to repairing rotted wooden utility poles such as wooden telegraph poles, power poles, light poles and the like, by providing 10 additional support about the region of rotting by means of a supporting element attached to the pole, it is to be noted that the scope of the invention is not so limited and it may extend further so as to be applicable to providing support for any type of pole 15 or similar structure whatever material the structure may be made from. Thus, the word pole as used in the present specification is not limited to utility poles but includes within its scope other structural elements, such as for example, poles used in 20 foundations, towers, masts, stumps, pylons, pier supports and the like.

One problem associated with wooden utility poles that have been in the ground for long periods of time is that rotting takes place in the region of ground



level, both above and below the surface of the ground. The remainder of the pole may be in good condition both above and below the rotted region, and the pole generally sound apart from the relatively small region 5 of rot around about ground level. Although the pole is rotted at a small area only, it is structurally weakened and hence, must be repaired or replaced. To overcome the relative high cost, in terms of time, labour and material, of replacing the pole entirely, 10 various attempts have been proposed in order to repair or renovate the pole. Such attempts to have not always been entirely satisfactory for a number of reasons associated with the cost, the degree of difficulty, length of time taken to perform the 15 process and the like.

Therefore, it is an aim of the present invention to attempt to overcome at least some of the problems of prior art devices and methods by providing an elegantly simple support member for and a method of 20 repairing or renovating damaged poles.

An elongate support member for providing added strength to a pole having a weakened or damaged portion by being connected to a part of the pole so as to be aligned along the lengthwise extending axis of 25 the pole characterised in that the support member comprises a first portion which extends to one side of the damaged or weakened portion having a flange which is provided with means to effect fastening of the support member to the pole in use, and a second 30 portion extending to the other side of the damaged or weakened portion being of a reduced width or thickness



for facilitating entry into a substrate in which the pole is positioned in use, the support member being held in abutting relationship with the pole in use by the action of the substrate bearing on the further portion.

According to another aspect of the present invention there is provided a utility pole support member suitable for being securely connected to a utility pole or similar, including an elongate flange portion having a first surface for abutting against the pole in use and an elongate rib portion for providing strength to the pole, the flange portion being connected to the rib portion at respective edges of the flange and rib portions, the flange portion being provided with means for securely connecting the support member to the pole.

In one form of the invention the flanges are curved in accordance with the corresponding curvature of the pole.

20 In one embodiment, the support member has two flange portions, one located on either side of the rib portion and connected thereto. In another embodiment, the support member is symmetrical about a longitudinal axis extending lengthwise along the centre line of the 25 rib portion. In another embodiment, the rib portion is substantially U-shaped and extends substantially perpendicularly from the extended common curved surface of the two flange portions.

30 In another embodiment, the elongate rib portion is tapered from a maximum size at its head end in use which is the end of the first portion to a minimum



size at its tip end in use which is the end of the second portion. In another embodiment, the flange portions each taper from a maximum width at the head end to a minimum width at their tip. The support member is preferably a large fluted nail arrangement wherein the sides of the flanges of the first portion are parallel and the sides of the flange of the second portion are tapered towards each other in the direction towards their tips.

In another embodiment, one means for securely attaching the support member to the pole comprises a cleat securely located internally of the U-shaped rib portion towards the tip end and a spike wherein the cleat has an angularly inclined engagement portion for cooperatively interacting with the spike which preferably has a corresponding angularly inclined engagement portion so that movement of the support member in the direction towards its tip end in use produces corresponding oblique movement of the spike into the pole to securely locate the support member to the pole.

The cleat and spike, if present, are located below the level of the substrate or below ground level in use, and the spike is tapered from its head to its tip.

The present invention will now be described by way of example with particular reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIGURE 1(a) illustrates a partial side elevation view of a utility pole located in the ground showing a rotted portion in the region of ground level;



FIGURE 1(b) is a view similar to that of Figure 1(a) illustrating one embodiment of the support member being partially forced down into the ground adjacent the pole;

5 FIGURE 1(c) is a view similar to Figure 1(a) showing the support member secured to the pole to provide reinforcement for the pole around the rotted portion;

10 FIGURE 2 is a front view of one embodiment of the support member in accordance with the present invention;

FIGURE 3 is a side view of the embodiment shown in Figure 2;

15 FIGURE 4 is a vertical cross-sectional view of one embodiment of a cleat and spike arrangement for securely fixing the support member to the pole showing the spike being lowered into position;

20 FIGURE 5 is a view similar to that of Figure 4 showing the spike driven home by the action of the cleat;

FIGURE 6 is a cross-sectional view of the support member along the line 6-6 of Figure 1(c).

25 FIGURE 7 is a side view of another embodiment of the support member in accordance with the present invention;

FIGURE 8 is a front view of the embodiment shown in Figure 7;

30 FIGURE 9 is a cross-sectional view of one form of the means to secure the support member to the pole above ground level;



## 6

FIGURES 10(a) to (d) are a series of horizontal cross-sections of the pole showing the spatial relationship of the support member and pole at various distances along the length of the pole.

5 In the series of Figures 1(a) to 1(c) there is shown a utility pole 2 having a top portion 4 in sound condition above ground level 6, a lower portion 8 in sound condition below ground level, and a middle portion 10 (denoted by the hatching) located about 10 ground level in rotted condition. The rot extends above and below ground level as shown. In Figure 1(b), a support member 12 is shown partially embedded 15 in the ground along side pole 2.

Support member 12 is driven into the ground in 15 the direction of arrow A by any suitable means such as a sledge hammer, pile driver or the like. In Figure 1(c), support member 12 which is shown as being driven into the ground to the required depth alongside pole 2 is securely fixed to the pole by a number of suitable 20 fasteners such as bolts 14 above the ground level 6. Nine such fasteners which may be 3/4" bolts are normally used but it is noted that any number of fasteners may be used. Additionally, three stainless steel Gerard strappings 16 are located above ground 25 level to securely fix the support member to the pole. The use of Gerard straps is optional.

Below ground level there is shown a spike 18 driven obliquely into the pole by movement of a cleat 20 in accordance with corresponding movement of the 30 support member in the direction of arrow A. As the support member is securely fixed to the top portion 4



and the lower portion 8 which are both in sound condition, the pole is reinforced about the rotted section 10, and thus is servicable for an extended period.

- 5       Turning now the Figures 2 to 6 which show the support member 4 in more detail, there is shown a support member having a first flange portion 22 extending lengthwise the extent of the support member separated from a second flange portion 24 also  
10 extending lengthwise by a generally U-shaped rib portion 26. The flange portions taper respectively from a maximum width at the head end 28 of the support member and to a minimum at their tip end 30. Similarly, as can be seen from Figure 3, the rib  
15 portion projects substantially perpendicularly from the flange surfaces and tapers from a maximum size at the head and to a minimum size at the tip. This embodiment of the support member is essentially a very large fluted nail. The tapering of the rib portion  
20 relative to the flange is provided so that when the support member is driven into the ground alongside the pole, the force of the earth compacted around it acts in a direction to force the support member into close contact with the pole as shown by arrows B of Figure  
25 1(c) and therefore the flanges of the support member align substantially parallel to the pole and support the pole over the entire length of the support member. As can be seen from Figure 6 flanges 22, 24 are curved in accordance with the diameter of the pole to which  
30 they are to be attached so that the flange follows the curvature of the pole.



Apertures 32 through which may be driven suitable fasteners such as flat-head nails, clouts or similar, are located at spaced apart intervals along the length of the flange which will be located above the ground level in use. The apertures may be oppositely paired in the flanges i.e. one aperture in one flange is paired with a corresponding aperture in the other flange or they may be alternatively off-set from one another in opposite flanges. In addition, slots 31 are located at spaced apart locations in the rib portion to provide means to further clamp the support member to the pole above ground in use.

The cleat 20 which is located internally of rib portion 26 towards the tip end 30 is provided for engaging the spike 18. Cleat 20 is provided with a sloping top surface 40 in order that spike 18 when lowered past it will clear the cleat and not be wedged tightly inside the rib in an incorrect position, and a stepped bottom surface 42 as shown in Figure 4. The stepped bottom surface is comprised of two surfaces arranged at about 90° to each other as an internal corner, and are designed for engagement with the head 44 of the spike. Spike 18 is wedge-like in shape tapering from a maximum width at its head 44 down to a point at its tip 46. The head 44 of the spike is stepped correspondingly to the stepped bottom surface 42 of the cleat i.e. the head of the spike has two surfaces arranged at about 90° to each other as an external corner, so that as the support member is driven further into the ground, the bottom surface 42 engages the head 44 of the spike.



In the embodiment shown in Figures 7 to 9, the support member 42 has a top portion 44 and a lower portion 46. Top portion 44 comprises two flanges 48 located on either side of a rib 50 in a similar manner 5 to that of support member 12 described earlier.

Apertures 52 are provided in flanges 48 at pre-selected locations for fixing the support member to the pole. One such method of fixing is shown in Figure 9 and comprises a ferrule 54 of an outside 10 diameter slightly less than the diameter of the apertures 52. Ferrule 54 is located through aperture 52 and is also received in a rebate or cutout 56 located in the outer surface of the pole. A bolt 58 is passed through a bore 59 located in the pole so 15 secure the ferrule in place in the aperture so as to firmly secure the pole support to the pole.

The lower portion 46 of the support member has two flanges 60, one located on either side of centrally placed rib 62 in a similar manner to that 20 described for the top portion 44. However, flanges 60 and rib 62 taper from a point about midway along the length of the support member from a thickness or width at the median of the support member corresponding to the thickness and width of flanges 48 and rib 50 to a 25 very much reduced width and thickness at the tip of the pole support located at the end of lower portion 46. In this embodiment there is no securing means located on the lower portion since the force of the substrate pushing against the rib and flanges of the 30 lower portion keeps the pole support hard against the pole when in the substrate and accordingly provides



10

additional support for the pole to overcome the weakness caused by the damaged or weakened portion.

It is to be noted from Figure 10(a) that when three similar pole supports are used to repair a pole,  
5 the supports can be arranged equidistant around the pole so that three bolts only may be used to secure the six flanges. In this arrangement three bores are drilled through the pole along diameters of the pole so that the head of one bolt engages one flange of one  
10 support member while the nut applied to the other end of the bolt engages a flange of another member as illustrated.

During installation of the support means against the pole, the support member is first embedded into  
15 the ground almost to its final position. While the support member made in accordance with the embodiment of the present invention as shown in Figure 4 is in this position, spike 18 is lowered down internally of the hollow rib portion until the spike is beneath the  
20 cleat 20, then the spike is raised upwardly so that the head 44 can be received against bottom surface 42 and tip 46 is located against pole 2. The support member is then driven further into the ground as shown by arrow C whilst holding spike 18 against the pole to  
25 drive tip 46 into the pole. Once the tip of the spike has entered the pole, the support member is forced downwardly into its final position, thereby driving spike obliquely into the pole as shown in Figure 5 by arrow D to securely locate the support member to the  
30 pole below ground level. The arrangement of the stepped bottom surface is so shaped to transfer



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substantially vertical downwards movement of the support member to a combined sideways and downwards movement of the spike into the pole.

It is to be noted that any number of similar 5 support members may be used to reinforce a single pole depending on circumstances such as the size of the pole, its weakness, and the size of the support members. Also the size and profile of the flange portions and of the rib portions may be altered in 10 accordance with circumstances such as the number of support members used, their size, weight and the like.

The described arrangement has been advanced merely by way of explanation and many modifications 15 may be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention which includes every novel feature and combination of novel features herein disclosed.



**CLAIMS:**

1. An elongate support member for providing added strength to a pole having a weakened or damaged portion by being connected to a part of the pole so as to be aligned along the lengthwise extending axis of the pole characterised in that the support member comprises a first portion which extends to one side of the damaged or weakened portion having a flange which is provided with means to effect fastening of the support member to the pole in use, and a second portion extending to the other side of the damaged or weakened portion being of a reduced width or thickness for facilitating entry into a substrate in which the pole is positioned in use, the support member being held in abutting relationship with the pole in use by the action of the substrate bearing on the further portion.
2. A support member according to claim 1 characterised in that the second portion is a continuation of the first portion and each of the first and second portions has two flanges, separated by a centrally located rib portion.
3. A support member according to claim 1 or 2 characterised in that the support member is symmetrical about the lengthwise extending axis through its centre line.



4. A support member according to claim 2 or 3 characterised in that the rib portion is substantially U-shaped and extends outwardly from the extended common curved surface of the two flange portions.
5. A support member according to any one of claims 2 to 4 characterised in that the rib is continually tapered from a maximum size at the end of the first portion to a minimum size at the end of the second portion.
6. A support member according to any one of claims 2 to 4 characterised in that the outer edges of the two flanges of the first portion are parallel and the outer edges of the flanges of the second portion are tapered towards the tip of the support member.
7. A support member according to any one of claims 2 to 6 characterised in that the means for securely attaching the support member to the pole comprises a cleat securely located internally of the U-shaped rib portion towards the tip end and a spike wherein the cleat has an angularly inclined engagement portion for cooperatively interacting with the spike which preferably has a corresponding angularly inclined engagement portion so that movement of the support member in the direction towards its tip end in use produces corresponding oblique movement of the spike into the pole to securely locate the support member to the pole.



8. A support member according to claim 7 characterised in that the cleat and spike arrangement are located below the level of the substrate.

9. A support member according to any one of claims 1 to 8 characterised in that the means for fastening the support member to the pole above the level of the substrate comprises a ferrule adapted to be received in a rebate located in the pole after passing through an aperture in the support member, said ferrule being fastened to the pole so as to clamp the support member securely to the pole.

10. A support member according to any one of claims 1 to 9 characterised in that the substrate in which the pole is positioned in the ground.

11. A utility pole support member suitable for being securely connected to a utility pole or similar, including an elongate flange portion having a first surface for abutting against the pole in use and an elongate rib portion for providing strength to the pole, the flange portion being connected to the rib portion at respective edges of the flange and rib portions, the flange portion being provided with means for securely connecting the support member to the pole.

12. A method of repairing a pole using a pole support member comprising a first portion having means for



securing the support to the pole above the level of the substrate in which the pole is positioned and a second portion of reduced width and/or thickness adapted for entry into the substrate such that the substrate bears against the second portion to locate the pole support against the pole in use thereby strengthening the pole, including locating the support adjacent the pole, and effecting entry of the pole into the substrate and fastening the support to the pole above the substrate.

13. A method according to claim 12 in which the support is provided with a second fastening means for fastening the support to the pole beneath the level of the substrate.

14. A pole in combination with a support member according to any of claims 1 to 11.

15. A pole when strengthened by the method of repairing a pole according to claim 12 or 13.

16. A pole support substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.



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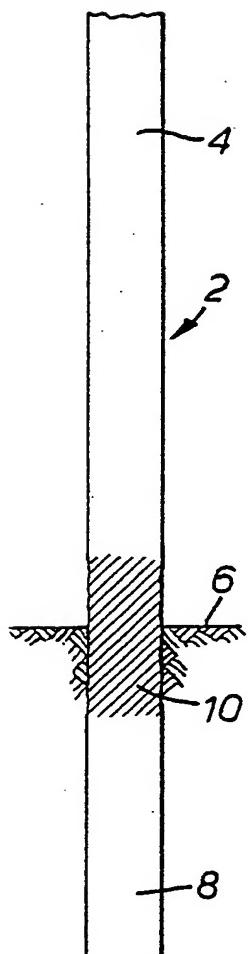


FIG. 1a.

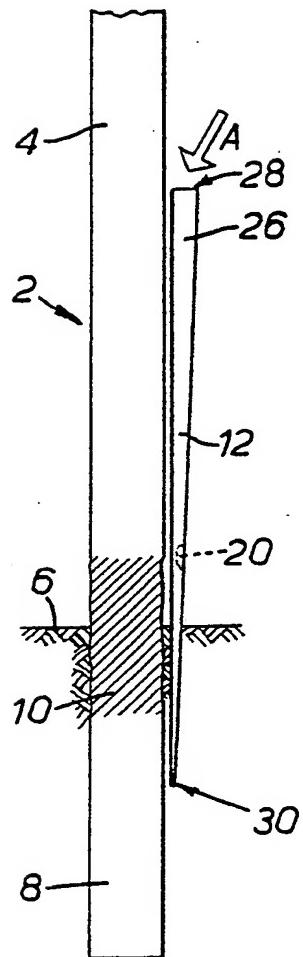


FIG. 1b.

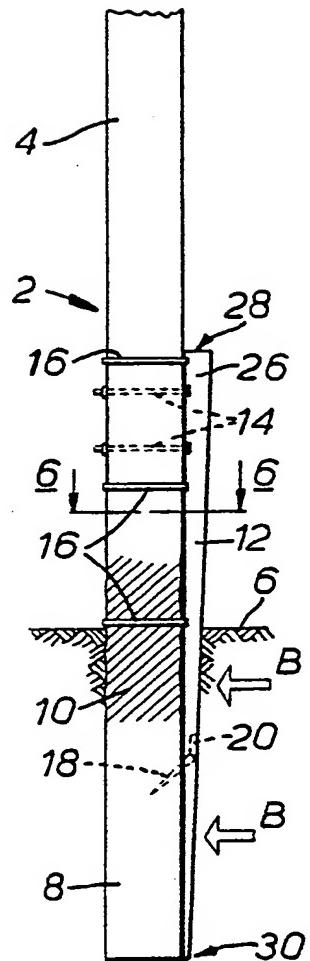
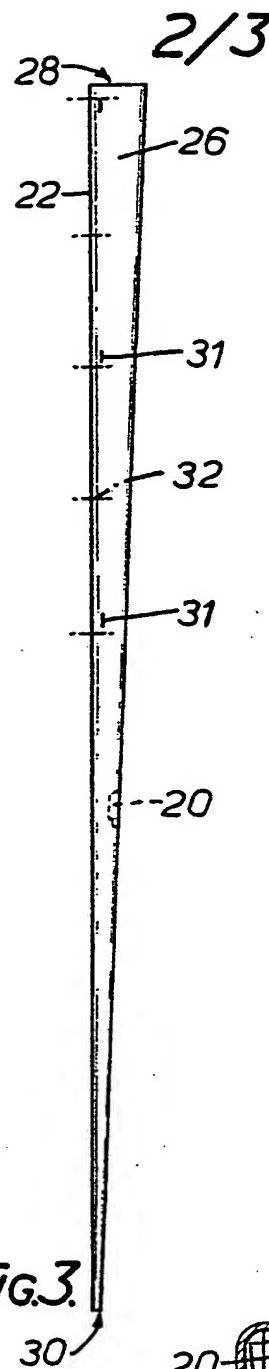
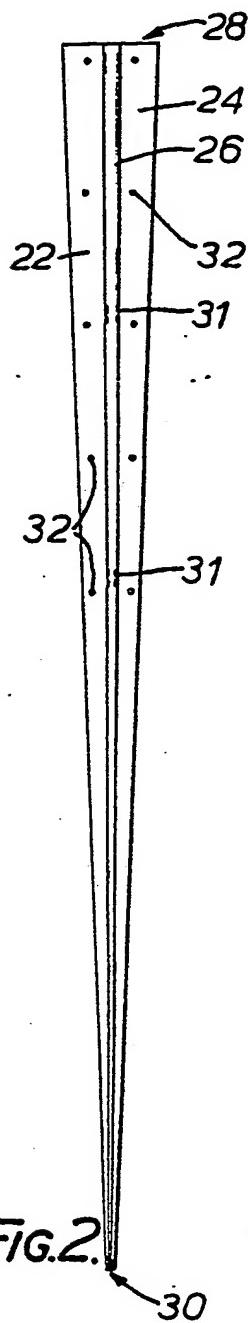
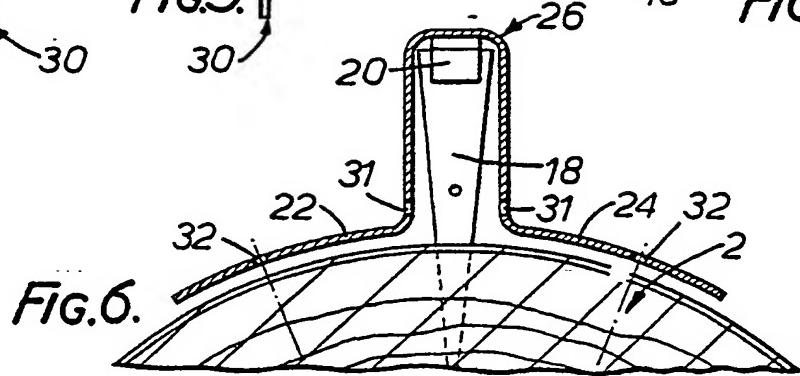
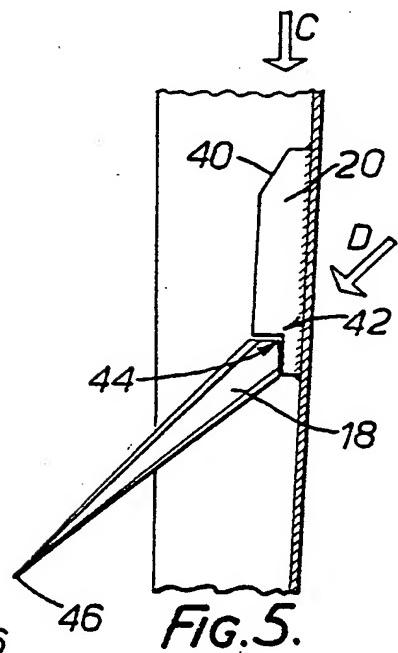
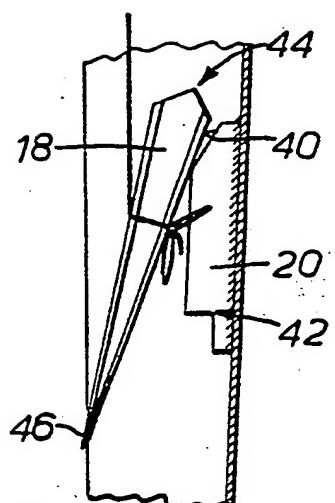


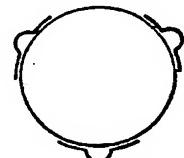
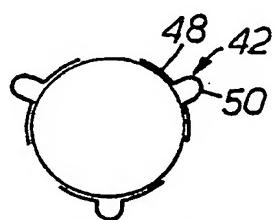
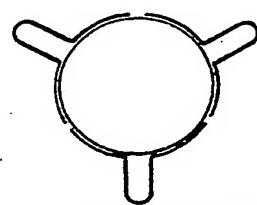
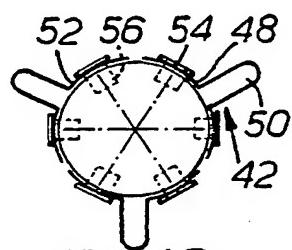
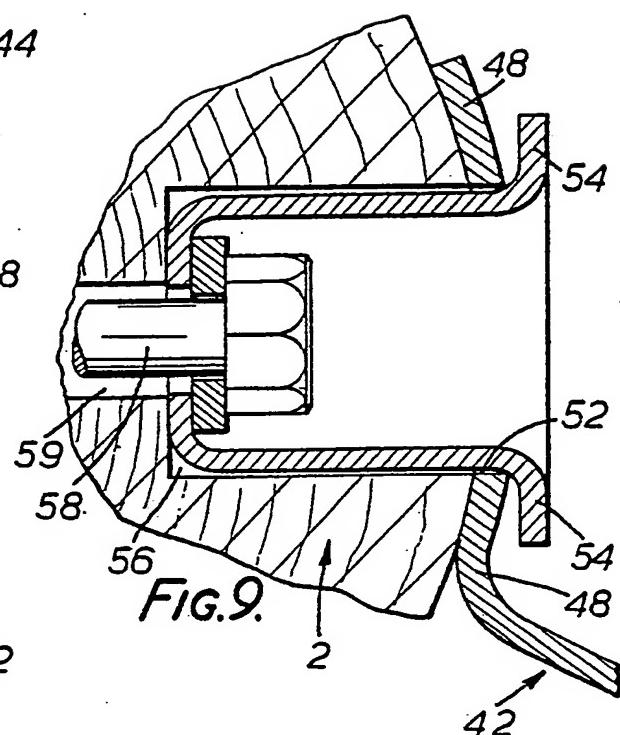
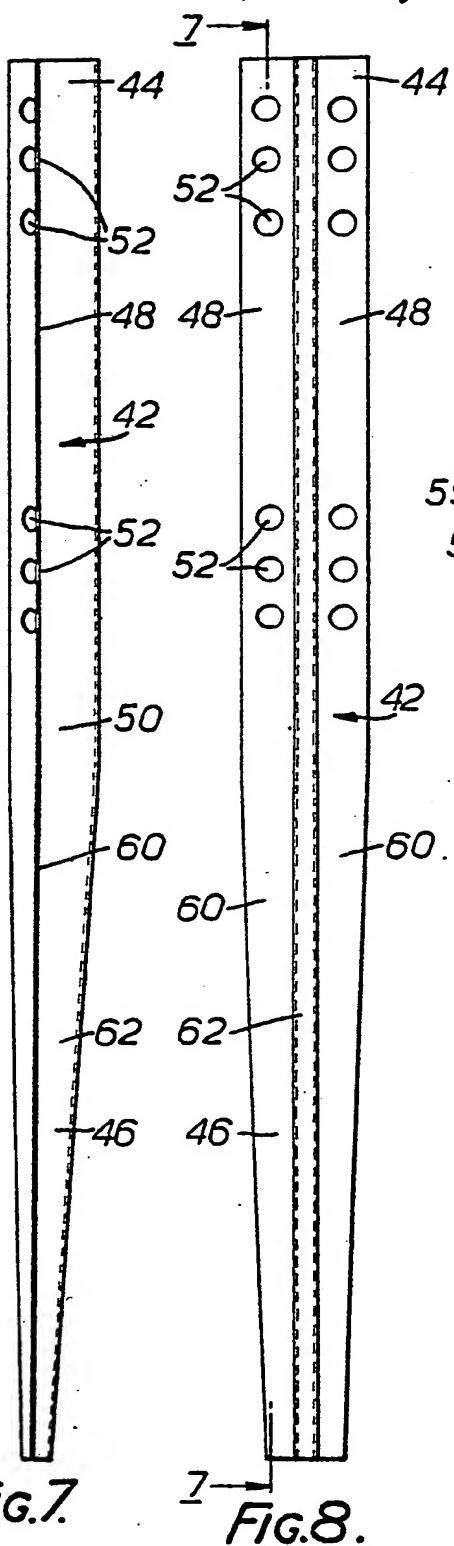
FIG. 1c.



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# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No PCT/AU 84/00075

## I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (If several classification symbols apply, indicate all) \*

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC

Int. Cl. 3 E04H 12/20

## II. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum Documentation Searched \*

Classification System	Classification Symbols
IPC	E04H 12/20, 12/22
Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched *	

AU : IPC as above

## III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT \*\*

Category *	Citation of Document, * with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages **	Relevant to Claim No. 1*
X, A	US, A, 1995874 (VAN DE MARK) 26 March 1935 (26.03.35)	
X	WO, A, 82/03241 (A-BETONG AB) 30 September 1982 (30.09.82)	
X	DE, C, 819575 (STARKSTROMANLAGEN AG) 5 November 1951 (05.11.51)	
X	US, A, 3350822 (NACHAZEL) 7 November 1967 (07.11.67)	
X	US, A, 3309824 (BARRETT) 21 March 1967 (21.03.67)	
X	US, A, 2327681 (VANDERVEER) 24 August 1943 (24.08.43)	
X	US, A, 2265452 (RUGGIERI) 9 December 1941 (09.12.41)	
X	US, A, 2090972 (ALLEN) 24 August 1937 (24.08.37)	
X	US, A, 1811899 (SPRING) 30 June 1931 (30.06.31)	

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## IV. CERTIFICATION

Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search \*

12 July 1984 (12.07.84)

Date of Mailing of this International Search Report \*

(19-07-84)

19 JULY 1984

International Searching Authority \*

Australian Patent Office

Signature of Authorized Officer \*\*

A.S. MOORE

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